

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus comprising:
 - a housing having a distal edge and a proximal edge and a longitudinal exterior dimension from the distal edge to the proximal edge; and
 - a tape retractably coilable within the housing and extending from the distal edge of the housing, wherein the tape includes,
 - a distal end,
 - a first set of distance marks functionally identifying positions relative to the distal end, and
 - a set of inside measure distance indicators each for indicating a distance from the distal end of the tape to a corresponding distance mark plus the longitudinal exterior dimension of the housing,
 - whereby the apparatus may be employed to perform an inside measurement whose value is indicated by the tape.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the tape further includes:
 - a set of outside measure distance indicators each for indicating a distance from the distal end of the tape to a corresponding distance mark;
 - whereby the apparatus may be employed to perform an outside measurement whose value is indicated by the tape.
3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:
 - the first set of distance marks includes major marks and minor marks; and
 - the longitudinal exterior dimension of the housing is a whole multiple of a distance between adjacent major marks.
4. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
 - an end piece coupled to the tape.

1 5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein:
2 the end piece is coupled to the tape so as to have a predetermined distance of longitudinal
3 slop;
4 whereby the end piece can be used in making outside measurements and inside
5 measurements.

1 6. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein:
2 the end piece is rigidly coupled to the tape and includes a portion which is perpendicular
3 to the tape for hooking over an end of an object to be outside measured; and
4 the tape further includes a second set of distance marks functionally identifying positions
5 relative to the perpendicular portion of the end piece.

1 7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the tape further includes:
2 a set of outside distance indicators each for indicating a distance from the perpendicular
3 portion of the end piece to a corresponding outside distance indicator.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:
2 the first set of distance marks includes major marks and minor marks; and
3 the longitudinal dimension of the housing is not an integer multiple of a distance between
4 adjacent major marks.

1 9. An improvement in a tape measure, the tape measure including a housing having a
2 longitudinal dimension from a distal edge to a proximal edge, and a retractable tape having a
3 distal end and bearing distance marks and distance indicators, wherein the improvement
4 comprises:

5 the distance indicators providing measurements from the distal end of the tape to the
6 proximal edge of the housing;

7 whereby inside measurements may be directly made with the improved tape measure
8 without a user having add in the distance of the longitudinal dimension.

1 10. The improvement of claim 9 in the tape measure, wherein the improvement further
2 comprises:
3 separate distance marks and distance indicators for inside measurement and for outside
4 measurement.

1 11. The improvement of claim 10 in the tape measure, wherein the improvement further
2 comprises:
3 an end piece rigidly coupled to the tape and including a perpendicular section; and
4 the inside measurement distance marks being offset along the tape from the outside
5 measurement distance marks by a distance corresponding to a thickness of the perpendicular
6 portion of the end piece.

1 12. The improvement of claim 9 in the tape measure, wherein the improvement further
2 comprises:
3 an end piece slideably coupled to the tape;
4 the distance marks including major marks and minor marks;
5 the distance indicators comprising outside measurement distance indicators and inside
6 measurement distance indicators; and
7 the longitudinal dimension of the housing is an integer multiple of a distance between
8 adjacent major marks;
9 whereby the outside distance indicators and the inside distance indicators are enabled to
10 share the same set of distance marks.